

Despite overwhelming support from the public and medical community, however, legitimate businesses such as Surtterra face financial and legal uncertainty because of a witch hunt opened up by Attorney General Sessions last year. To make matters worse, he is now hamstringing scientific research to analyze the medical applications of cannabis.

I, along with my colleagues from both sides of the aisle, have taken a multipronged approach to improving our country's irresponsible and ill-advised laws on cannabis. Congressman BLUMENAUER and I are addressing the industry's significantly disproportionate tax burden through the Small Business Tax Equity Act, legislation which provides tax parity to marijuana businesses operating in compliance with State law.

I am also working with the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GARRETT) to urge the Department of Justice to order the Drug Enforcement Administration to immediately approve additional registrations for the bulk manufacture of cannabis for exclusively federally-approved research purposes.

Compliant manufacturers are attempting to provide State and Federal Governments and medical professionals with fact-based research on cannabis' effects, both adverse and therapeutic, but their applications to do so aren't being assessed. It is difficult for me to comprehend the logic behind blocking scientific research to analyze the medical applications of cannabis because I believe it is critical for policymakers to possess objective data on the effectiveness of cannabis as an alternative treatment for anxiety, depression, pain, psychosis, post-traumatic stress disorder, opioid addiction, and epilepsy. We owe it to American patients to open up the field of research on this.

Now, the only logical explanation I can think of is that the Attorney General knows the facts of this field of research won't support his policies or the witch hunt he and his Department have been conducting on legal State-regulated operators across the country.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, drug overdoses claimed nearly 68,000 lives throughout the United States in 2017 alone, with over 45,000 of those as a result of opioids, legal drugs.

An aptly timed article was published this morning by CNN Chief Medical Correspondent Sanjay Gupta in which he details the results of his investigation into the benefits of cannabis over the course of a 5-year study.

□ 2045

Though admittedly skeptical at first, after dedicating countless hours with both patients and scientists scattered throughout the globe, Dr. Gupta began to view the plant in a different light: as a source for healing instead of a gateway for substance abuse.

At the conclusion of Dr. Gupta's in-depth examination, he came to the de-

duction that "not only can cannabis work for a variety of conditions such as epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, and pain; sometimes, it is the only thing that works." Referenced in this article is an analysis conducted by researchers from the RAND Corporation, and supported by the National Institute on Drug Abuse, which showed an approximated 20 percent decline in opioid overdose deaths between 1999 and 2010 in States with legalized medical marijuana and functioning dispensaries.

Mr. Speaker, this analysis is similar to countless others I have heard that prove cannabis can quell both the disease of addiction and the pains associated with it. Now, some may view this investigation and others as if they are anecdotal, and to them I say, "Let's find out." Let's stop hamstringing Federal research of the issue and let's let the facts speak for themselves.

As I have said before in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, the best ally that illegal operators like drug cartels and drug traffickers—who do not pay taxes, who target children, who have no safety standards for their products—the best ally they have are the policies that the Attorney General has embraced. Because by continuing to hamstring Federal research, over tax, and stoke uncertainty, legally operating businesses that are State regulated, that pay taxes, that are helping patients who are suffering, can no longer compete. And when these businesses can no longer compete, people turn to the black market.

So inadvertently, I hope, the Attorney General is actually doing a great favor to the criminals operating outside the law by punishing law-abiding Americans trying to control the substance and make it safer.

So I am here today to, once again, call upon this administration to not just allow, but encourage, meaningful reform on our Nation's cannabis policies. On this issue, we have an opportunity to reinforce the 10th Amendment and ensure the Federal Government does not overstep its boundaries and supersede the will of the States. On this issue, we have an opportunity to afford businesses selling legal products the chance to contribute to our economy and create jobs, while simultaneously crippling the criminal enterprises empowered by and prospering under the Attorney General's policies. And perhaps most importantly, we have an opportunity to change—and possibly even save—the lives of Americans suffering from opioid addiction and other diseases and conditions.

Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of colleagues in this Chamber who say people should be able to buy whatever health insurance or get whatever kind of health coverage they want, and the government should interfere as little as possible, and I agree. But on this issue, there seems to be a hypocrisy, and many colleagues want to impose a Federal view or a Federal perspective

on States, on the people of States like Florida, who have already decided explicitly and clearly and overwhelmingly.

So I thank my colleagues who joined me here tonight, and I truly look forward to the day where this institution can legislate in a way that respects the people of Florida, respects the people of Oregon, respects the people of Colorado, and American citizens in 36 States in the union, who have spoken loud and clear.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 49 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 2150

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SESSIONS) at 9 o'clock and 50 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4, FAA REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2018; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3144, PROVIDING FOR THE OPERATIONS OF THE FEDERAL COLUMBIA RIVER POWER SYSTEM; AND PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM APRIL 30, 2018, THROUGH MAY 4, 2018

Mr. WOODALL, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 115-650) on the resolution (H. Res. 839) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4) to reauthorize programs of the Federal Aviation Administration, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3144) to provide for operations of the Federal Columbia River Power System pursuant to a certain operation plan for a specified period of time, and for other purposes; and providing for proceedings during the period from April 30, 2018, through May 4, 2018, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 51 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, April 25, 2018, at 9 a.m.